

R E P O R T .

A majority of the committee on Education to which were referred the order of the House instructing them to inquire into the expediency of reporting a bill to be entitled, an act to establish upon some sure and permanent basis a general system of primary school education in this State, and the leave to introduce a bill entitled an act, for the better education of the youth of the State, by means of common schools, beg leave to report :

That they do not deem it expedient at the present time, to attempt to establish a general system of common school education. In many of the counties of the State, local systems are already in existence, supported in part by taxation upon the counties in which they respectively exist. These systems are no doubt imperfect, but they are much better than no schools at all, and supply to a limited extent the wants of the community. In other counties no tax is levied for the support of education. To improve the systems already existing, and to establish schools in counties where there is no tax levied to sustain them, would require either an addition to the burdens already borne by the people, or a considerable appropriation immediately from the Treasury of the State. Whether it would be prudent to resort to either of these modes of raising the fund necessary to establish a general system at this time, is a question which admits of but one answer. Either step would not only be productive of complaint and discontent, but might be attended with serious danger to the credit of the State. The amount required for the establishment and maintenance of a thorough system of education here must be greater in proportion than in the New England States or New York, on account of the comparative sparsity of our population, and all will admit that our taxation is already as heavy as can be comfortably borne.

The undersigned are fully aware that a deep feeling exists upon this subject and that many are anxiously expecting the dawn of improvement in the educational system of the State. They trust however that the delay will not be attributed to them, when they are thus fettered by circumstances beyond their control. They would cheerfully undertake the task of digesting a plan for gener-